

I oppose loosening the rules designed to promote and protect diversity of media ownership. These rules were adopted to ensure that the public would receive a diverse range of viewpoints from the media, and not simply the opinions of a handful of media conglomerates.

Many of us who have been privileged to live in other parts of the world see very plainly that our country's deregulation of the media has served to restrict the range of programming and news coverage. A plethora of available cable channels is no remedy for this restriction of the spectrum of "acceptable" discussion. Our forebears in the US had the good sense to recognize that restrictions on cross-ownership served citizens well and strengthened our democracy. We do not need enormous, ever-growing media conglomerates; laws of economies of scale have no application in this realm. Local programming has clearly suffered due to deregulation of this sort; diversity of expression has diminished in ways that are obvious to all sentient Americans of a certain age. People joke about it all the time, and it's sad to see that so many of us are unaware of the underlying causes, unaware that the radio broadcast spectrum is our public property. This lack of citizen awareness, in itse!

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he essential barrenness of our media landscape, even in spite of the "wealth" of cable "choices," for example: myriad distractions, thematically formatted movie and rerun and lifestyle channels, news channels with interchangeable faces serving up similar content and similarly proscribed discussions--this might be variety, of a sort, but it is in no wise the same as diversity.